

I firmly believe that we can fight terrorism and keep our communities safe without sacrificing the rights and liberties that generations of Americans have fought so hard to secure. H.R. 514 fails this critical test, and I will vote to oppose it.

Without a single hearing, committee vote, or even the opportunity to offer amendments, this legislation extends provisions that give the federal government sweeping authority to spy on United States citizens. One such provision allows the government to obtain "any tangible thing" in its anti-terrorism investigation-including library or bookstore records-regardless of its relevance to the case. Another provision allows federal law enforcement to obtain wiretaps without being required to identify the person, building, or business being spied upon to a secret court. During the Bush Administration, the Justice Department used this authority to illegally wiretap American citizens. Evidence of past abuses demand that the Patriot Act be reformed with stricter oversight and better safeguards to ensure security does not come at the cost of our Constitutional freedoms.

The threat of terrorism is real and persistent. My first priority as a Member of Congress is to keep America safe. Be assured I will continue working with President Obama and my colleagues in Congress to ensure that all levels of law enforcement have the tools and flexibility they require.